
Summary of July 2002 Design Guidelines Workshop Route 9 Site

King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

July 2002

Clean Water – A Sound Investment

Introduction

In November 1999, King County approved its Regional Wastewater Services Plan. One aspect of this plan includes building a new regional wastewater treatment system, called Brightwater, to protect public health and the environment by meeting the wastewater treatment needs in rapidly growing south Snohomish County and north King County. As a result of nearly three years of study and evaluation, King County is developing an environmental impact statement on two alternative systems; each system includes a treatment plant site (Unocal and Route 9 sites) with several options for conveyance pipelines and marine outfall locations. A final decision on the locations for the Brightwater treatment system will be made in mid-2003, after the final environmental impact statement is completed.

As a part of the ongoing Brightwater siting process, a series of three workshops are being held to develop design guidelines for the Brightwater treatment plant. These workshops provide an opportunity for King County to hear firsthand from community members who live nearby the potential Brightwater plant sites about their priorities, visions, and values for the future of the sites under consideration. The project architects will use the design guidelines that result from these workshops to develop preliminary design concepts for the Brightwater plant at both the Unocal and Route 9 sites.

This report summarizes the results of the first Route 9 site workshop, which was conducted at the Hollywood School House in Woodinville on July 11, 2002.

The Route 9 site workshops were advertised using a variety of methods, including:

- Paid advertisements in a number of area newspapers
- Mailing of a postcard to residents and businesses within approximately one mile of the Route 9 site and to all addresses with 98072 and 98296 zip codes (includes addresses in Woodinville, unincorporated Snohomish County, and Snohomish) on the Brightwater project's mailing list
- Press releases to the area governments and local interest groups
- Distribution of postcard to businesses in the Route 9 site area

Workshop Format

The July 11, 2002, Route 9 workshop was held from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The first hour of the workshop consisted of short presentations on what King County has learned about the site to date, how wastewater treatment plants can be designed, and the Brightwater design process.

During the second hour of the workshop, participants were divided into two small discussion groups. In these groups, participants were asked to respond to a series of questions about the site, its importance to the community, how it is used by the community, and their vision for the site if Brightwater was to be built on it. Each group was assisted by a facilitator and a design professional.

In the third hour of the workshop, participants shared the results of their discussions with all attendees. A volunteer from each group summarized the ideas generated at that discussion table.

Workshop Summary

Considerable public comment was generated in the discussion groups. Some participants mentioned that while they were willing to participate in this process, they do not want the Brightwater plant to be located at the Route 9 site. Discussion tended to focus on three areas: issues to be addressed in the design of Brightwater, opportunities to be considered before designs are developed, and specific uses that could be incorporated into the site. The common themes from each table are summarized below.

Issues

Participants in the two discussion groups identified a number of issues for King County to address before it develops designs for a facility on the site. A number of common themes emerged, including:

Odor control: There is poor air circulation because the site is in an inversion area, so odors linger (an example cited of this condition is the lingering smells of Stockpot Soups). Odors need to be controlled completely by enclosing or lidding facilities. King County needs to be held accountable for odor control.

Water Quality: The Cross Valley aquifer is adjacent to the site (to the east) and is the source of water for many people in the area. In some places the aquifer is very shallow, which will make it difficult to avoid during plant and conveyance line construction. Construction and operation of these facilities cannot impact the aquifer.

Other issues to be addressed include:

- Site safety: the storage of methane or chlorine on the site was mentioned in particular
- Site security, in terms of the design's ability to address terrorist threats
- Minimizing construction impacts, such as noise, traffic, dust, etc.

Opportunities

Participants at the two discussion groups identified a number of opportunities for King County to consider before it develops designs for a facility on the site. A number of common themes emerged, including:

Improving the built environment: Including the removal of auto recycling yards and the beautification/removal of the Opus warehouse, and improving odor control at Stockpot Soups. Fulfilling community needs for community services, such as meeting space, recreation facilities, and/or some type of a regional facility.

Community integration: Integrating the site with the surrounding rural nature of the community, both through facility architecture and site landscaping. Ideas to blend the facility include: planting native plants, screening the access road from 228th, planting mature trees, including a wide forested buffer, integrating facilities into the site's eastern hillside, and making views to the site aesthetically pleasing from all vantage points.

Environmental conservation/enhancement: Preserving and enhancing on-site and adjacent streams and wetlands for wildlife benefits, and maintaining forested areas to prevent landslides. These opportunities could be enhanced by providing public access to interpret these efforts via pedestrian and equestrian trails around some or all of the site.

Other opportunities to be considered include:

- Connecting to other trail systems within the area
- Improving congestion on Route 9
- Providing funds to transport students to the site if an education facility is part of the site's development
- Providing access to ballooners for takeoffs and landings

Uses

Participants at the two discussion groups identified potential uses for the site and surrounding area for King County to consider. A number of common themes emerged, including:

Facilities: The specific facilities that could be built on the site include regional facilities – a watershed resources center, an environmental education center, and community facilities – a community meeting center, recreational fields, and equestrian facilities. Offsite recreation fields may be preferable to minimize traffic to the area. Facilities to avoid locating on the site include bus barns, jails, and cemeteries.

Passive recreation: Incorporating an interpretive/nature trail that looped around the entire site.

Facilitator notes from each of the discussion tables are included in the appendix to this report.

Follow-up

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants were informed that they could expect to see their input reflected in the form of draft design guidelines, which will be presented at the next workshop, scheduled for August 7, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Hollywood Schoolhouse in Woodinville. Participants were invited to attend this workshop to ensure that their input was accurately reflected in the draft design guidelines, and to help further refine those guidelines.

For more information about the design guidelines workshops or the Brightwater Project, please call 206-684-6799 or 1-888-707-8571, or visit the project web site at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wtd/brightwater/>.

Appendix A – Facilitator Notes

Design Guidelines Workshop #1

Route 9 site, Thursday July 11, 2002

Table 1 Comments

Issues

- No air circulation on site – in an inversion area
- Smells linger as evidenced by Stockpot Soups
- Water quality concerns: Cross Valley aquifer is adjacent to the site (many within the area rely on this aquifer for water)
- Conveyance pipe construction will hit aquifer (in some places water table is very close to the surface)
- Traffic concerns – during construction
- Noise and dust – during construction
- Surrounding area is on septic – will not benefit from the facility
- Plant designed with high security standards to counteract terrorist threat
- Safety concerns (methane, chlorine on site)
- Preserve rural character
- Don't want a high profile education/resource center that will add to the traffic of the area while not benefiting local population
- Control odors by lidding facility

Opportunities

- Removal of wrecking yards – an eyesore
- Aesthetically pleasing from neighbors viewpoint (not just Route 9)
- Wildlife/nature theme with walking/horse trails
- Community services to meet high demand for recreation facilities
- Go beyond secondary treatment to Potable; biosolids to Class A.
- Ballooning landing and takeoff; sites where this can occur have dwindled as area has developed
- Wetlands at north end of the site
- Connect site to trail system
- Replace the Grange with a community meeting place (low-key, not a regional attraction)
- Quiet recreation trails
- Preserve Little Bear Creek
- Equestrian services/facilities

Future uses

- Don't share the site with undesirable uses such as bus barns, jails, etc.

Table 2 Comments

Issues

- Traffic is a problem on Route 9
- Want noise barriers
- Protect aquifer (many folks west of SR 522 are on wells)
- Consider parking and additional traffic congestion issues if ball fields are built
- Concerned about the high cost of this site (more expensive than Unocal)
- How will the County be held accountable if the plant is not odor free?
- Make sure facility is large enough to handle growing demands
- Emergency overflow preparedness needs to be in place
- What will happen to new warehouse that has been built?

Opportunities

- Improve congestion on Route 9
- Improve Stockpot Soups odor situation
- Hide it
- Include 100 foot wide landscaped and forested buffer with berm for containment
- Trees could help mitigate noise
- Blend and cover
- Architecture should reflect history of the area
- Use native plants
- Integrate plant facilities into eastern hillside to hide it
- Put a curve in access road to screen facility from 228th Street
- Ball fields/recreation fields are an important/needed quality in the community
- Funds to transport students to the site would need to be included along with the development of an environmental education facility
- Accommodate Grange Hall users (the Grange Hall is an important quality/use that needs to be maintained)
- Community access to the facility
- Keep forested to protect from landslides
- Beautify (Opus?) warehouse
- Tear down warehouse
- Protect wildlife, fish, and wetlands on the site and adjacent to the site
- Enhance streams through the site
- Enhance salmon habitat
- Maintain human access in the area
- Integrate site with surrounding community
- Interpret water resources in general
- Watershed resources center

Future Uses

- Integrate an environmental education center (could interpret area history of the area)
- Interpretive/nature trail throughout site (loop around site)
- Offsite recreation fields would be preferable to minimize new traffic to the area